La. Slaying Theory Discussed

From News Dispatches

NEW ORLEANS, La., Dec. 11—Louisiana Attorney General William Guste acknowledged today that some members of the biracial commission investigating the deaths of two Southern University students have concluded both were killed by a single shotgun blast, but he denied reports they were near identifying the person who fired the fatal shot.

Guste, questioned about a report in the New York Times, said the 12-member commission had reached no consensus on the issue of who fired the fatal shots.

The Times, quoting sources close to the investigation, said today that authorities "have just about pinpointed the spot" from which the shots were fired and members believe it is now possible to identify who fired the shot.

The newspaper also repeated reports from last week that the commission was expected to conclude that the same shotgun blast killed Leonard Douglas Brown and Denver A. Smith.

The two died in a confrontation with police in front of the school administration building Nov. 16.

Gov. Edwin W. Edwards, meanhile; said former New York Times editor Turner Catledge may have leaked the story.

Catledge is a member of the 12-member biracial commission empaneled for the probe.

The governor, when asked if he thought Catledge might have leaked the story to The Times, said, "Why, naturally. Think about it. Turner Catledge serves on the committee and was present at the time of a meeting to explain to me the committee's goings-on.

"As a former editor of The New York Times, he would probably be most anxious to stir up controversy and heap ridicule on our state. That certainly was the attitude he exhibited to me during our brief meeting."

Edwards said, "if the story did come from him, I think the attorney general should investigate his further association with the committee."

Guste, who is chairman of the panel, said, "I could not call it (the article) inaccurate. I'd prefer to call it premature."

Catledge said, "I have nothing to say about this story."

Guste maintained that a number of commission members have probably reached their own conclusions, but he emphasized that as a group the commission has made no findings other than the previously announced conclusion that a law officer fired the first tear-gas canister that preceded the shooting.

The commission is made up of six whites and six blacks, including two students.

Guste said the commission probably would conclude its investigation and announce its findings some time this week.